



Preservation Design Assistance

Technical Assistance for Pennsylvania Communities

PA SHPO staff can provide no-cost preliminary design consultation for preservation projects within Certified Local Governments (CLGs). The goal of the program is to help communities achieve preservation outcomes for historic buildings by:

- providing design expertise at critical moments in project planning
- troubleshooting challenging design issues, and
- brainstorming design solutions.

CLG Preservation Design Assistance is intended to help make informed decisions about a project. This could include exploring appropriate building uses, identifying alternatives for accessibility improvements, or producing sketch plans for façade improvements. This program **will not** provide construction drawings, bid specifications, or detailed technical reports. The program will, however, provide CLG partners with graphics and written summary documents that will help communicate ideas and recommendations to outside designers and to stakeholders.

Eligible Requests for Assistance

Examples of the kinds of questions/requests that we can assist with include, but aren't limited to:

- developing options for adapting a historic commercial building for a new use,
- conceptualizing possible designs for reorganizing spaces and functions within a building,
- investigating and visualizing changes to the façade of a historic building,
- identifying opportunities to improve accessibility in and around a historic building,
- analyzing code compliance issues and preservation-friendly alternatives for historic buildings.

At the end of the project, the SHPO staff will summarize the goals and outcomes, along with all graphics, in a memo that will help partners have productive conversations with other stakeholders.

Requesting Assistance

The program is a benefit of a municipality's designation as a CLG and is available to the municipal government, Main Street organizations, community development corporations, history/preservation organizations, and other community organizations for projects within the boundaries of the CLG. Requests from organizations other than the local government will need to be endorsed by the municipality when the request is submitted to the PA SHPO.

Requests are accepted on a rolling basis. Each request will be reviewed to determine whether PA SHPO staff can provide the assistance requested within the desired timeframe. While the PA SHPO will make every attempt to support as many projects as possible, limited capacity and ongoing projects may affect availability and scheduling. Most projects will take about 30 days to get started, and is not well suited for projects that are urgent or deadline-driven.





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To request assistance, please email the [Community Preservation Coordinator](#) for your region with the following information:

- Name, title, organization, email address, and phone number for project contact
- Property/project location, including street address
- Property owner name and whether the requesting organization has permission to access the property
- Photographs of the building and project location (exterior and interior if available). Include photos of adjacent properties and streetscapes
- Description of the project and any issues/questions
- Description of your goals, desired outcomes, and anticipated products
- Timelines and deadlines for the project
- Letter of support from municipality (if request is coming from a partner organization)
- Please limit your request to 2 typed pages or the equivalent.

